



RUNWAY SAFETY BULLETIN NO. 12

April 20, 2004

TO: All Towered Airport Personnel

FROM: ATO Regional Runway Safety Program Manager
Southern Region

Safety is our #1 priority. As we continue our partnership with airports, tenants and users to enhance safety awareness and reduce the number of surface incidents of Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (VPDs), we must continue to be vigilant in our efforts to develop procedures and solutions. As part of our ongoing commitment to the aviation community, members of the Regional Runway Safety Team are available to participate in workshops/seminars, provide surface safety training, CDs, and other educational material. We all must do whatever we can to reduce and/or prevent VPDs, which is steadily increasing.

One problem that has been identified in several recent incidents has been miscommunications between airport vehicle operators and air traffic controllers. In many of the incidents, either the communications were misunderstood or one party failed to hear what the other had said. Always ensure that you **know** what ATCT has instructed and always ensure that ATCT **understands** where you are and what you want. When operating on the airport, the ultimate responsibility is yours to ensure a safe operation. Make sure your communications are clear, concise and completely understood.

As a reminder, here are a few additional helpful hints:

- Know your airport. If you are not sure where to go or how to get to another location, ask for progressive instructions from the controller. Carry an airfield diagram with you for quick reference.
- Always check your radio to make sure it works properly before entering the movement area.
- Always "read back" hold short instructions.
- If you don't understand, or are not sure what the controller said, ask them to repeat it. Do not assume anything.
- As pilots say, 'keep your head on a swivel'. Be aware of your surroundings and watch for aircraft. Listening to other radio transmissions will help you maintain situational awareness.
- Before driving, review the airport's rules and regulations for driving on the movement area.
- Keep radio communications short and concise to avoid radio clutter that may lead to confusion.
- Aircraft ALWAYS have the right of way!

Everyone operating vehicles on or are allowed to access the Airport Movement Areas should have completed an airport driver's training course, be authorized to operate on the movement areas, or be escorted by trained personnel.

We encourage you to bring this to the attention of your staff **today**. Everyone should be reminded to pay special attention while driving on movement areas. A simple reminder could prevent a disastrous event at your airport.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anna B. Cohen'.

Anna B. Cohen